

The Derbyshire Ballad: Or, Sir William Stanley's Travels.

IN Lancashire there liv'd a Lord,
A worthy Lord, and a Man of Fame,
Whose Dwelling, was at Latham-Hall,
And the Earl of Derby call'd by Name.
He had two Sons of Noble Race,
Which bred their Father great delight,
He bred them up in Learning good,
Thereby their Wisdom to requite.
The eldest was call'd my good Lord Strange,
Lord Ferdinand call'd by his Name;
The youngest call'd Sir William Stanley,
And a noble valiant-hearted Man.
But as it fell out upon a Day,
Sir William fell upon his Knee;
And desired Leave of his Father,
That some Foreign Countries he might see.
Oh! grant me Leave, my Father, said he,
Some Foreign Countries for to see;
To learn the Speech of other Lands,
Whereby I may renowned be.
I'll grant thee Leave, Son Will, he said,
For three Years Space thou shalt be free;
And Gold and Silver thou hast enough
For to maintain thee gallantly.
But before thou goest take those my Rings,
Then William takes Leave of Latham-Hall,
And of all that in Lovely Latham lay,
And then prepares himself for the Sea.
To travel into strange Countries,
But when he first got on Ship-Board:
He to himself did in Secret say,
I'll make a Vow to the Living Lord.
That three seven Years shall pass a way,
Before to Old-England I will return:
Or ever on English Ground do tread,
These three seven Years shall be past and gone.
According to the Vow he made,
Sir William travell'd into France:
He tarried there not three Years,
But he learned French, and eke to dance.
He learned French, and their Affairs,
And then he travel'd into Spain;
He tarry'd there not half a Year,
E'er he the Spanish Tongue did obtain.
But he thought he'd been in Spain too long,
Then towards Italy he would go;
To Rome, and to High Germany,
To view the Countries all a row.
And see what Pleasures in them might be,
In Rome, and in High Germany:
He staid three Years before he went,
Then into Egypt takes his way.

To view that Court was his Intent,
But one Year and a half Sir William staid,
Taking his Leave most courteously
Of the King of Morocco and his Gentry.
Next into Russia Land he went,
One Doctor Bell he met with there:
Who knew Sir William Stanley well,
For he was born at Manchester.
Tho' he'd not seen him many Years,
Oh! what's the cause the Doctor said,
That brought you, Sir William, in this Country
I came to travel, Sir William said.
And pray Doctor what brought thee?
I'm to do a Cure, the Doctor said he;
Which is on the Emperor's Feet to be done,
And I have done it right perfectly.
Which none could do but an Englishman,
Then he made him acquainted with the Emperor,
And he entertain'd him with the Emperor,
And gave him Silver and Gold great store.
Desiring his Company for seven Years,
But one three Years Sir William did stay;
Within the Emperor's Court so free,
But then Sir William went away.
To Bethlehem right speedily,
And likewise to Jerusalem;
Whereat our Saviour Christ did die;
If it was so, he asked them.
This is the Tree the Jews then said,
Whereon the Carpenter's Son did die.
That was my Saviour, Sir William said,
For sure he dy'd for Love of me.
But one half Year Sir William staid,
He kiss'd the Cross with weeping Eye;
And then he would to Turkey go,
Where he endur'd more Misery.
For passing thro' Constantinople,
Where the Great Turk he then did lie,
Then Sir William he was taken,
And by their law condemn'd to die.
Before I will forsake my Loving,
My blessed Saviour, and sweet Lamb;
Sweet Jesus Christ, that dy'd for me:
I'll die the worst Death that ever did Man.
Farewel Father, and farewell Mother,
And farewell all Friends at Latham-Hall;
Little do you know, I am a prisoner taken,
Or how I am subject unto the Thrall.
A Lady, walking unto the Prison-Wall,
Hearing Sir William fore to lament;
Unto the Great Turk she did go,
To beg his Life was her Intent.

A Boon, a Boon, thou Emperor,
For thou art a Lord of great Command;
Grant me the Life of the Englishman,
Therefore against me do not stand.
He is a Lord of vast Estate,
And loves me mightily; Therefore
He'll carry me into his own Country,
And safely thither conduct me o'er.
Take thou thy Boon thou gay Lady,
For thou art one of a tender Heart;
But let him yeild to marry thee,
Or let him be hang'd e'er he depart.
The Lady is to the Prison gone
Wherein Sir William he did lie;
Be of good Cheer, thou Englishman,
For I think this Day I have set thee free.
If thou wilt yeild to wed with me,
And take me for thy bride;
To take me into thy own Country,
And safely thither to be my Guide.
I may not marry, Sir William said,
To never a Lady in this Country,
For if ever on English Ground I come,
I have a Wife and Children three.
This Excuse serv'd Sir William well,
But the Lady was sorry for what he did say:
And gave him Six Hundred Pounds in Gold,
To carry him to his own Country.
But one Half-Year Sir William staid,
After from Prison he was free;
And then he would to Greenland go,
Where he endur'd more Misery,
For three Months there's nothing but dark,
And their Sir William was forc'd to want.
For he fed there on nothing but Roots,
And they to him grew wondrous scant.
His Shoes were frozen to his Feet,
Himself he knew not where to tread:
On his hands and knees was forc'd to creep,
Expecting each Hour he should be dead.
He saw Ships coming from fair England,
To fetch Wales and Oil were thither came,
Whom he'd known in his own Country,
A Man of noble Birth and Fame.
You are welcome from Travel the Owner said,
But scarce one Word Sir William would say,
Until that he had unto him sworn,
Nor on Shipboard would he come that Day,
That he should never name him at Latham-hall
Nor to any Friend that he should see;
Nor ever his Name in Question call,
When he came into his own Country,
For three Years yet I have to stay,
Accordingly to the Vows I made,
And those three Years shall have an End,
E'er I on English Ground will tread.
Then back they strait came for Holland,
Being Joyful of either's Company;
And the Captain took his leave of him,
And bids him welcome to the Low Country.

One John Howlet he then met withal,
A Musician and a Tumbler free:
And with him Sir William a Contract made,
And was very glad of his Company.
With this same Howlet he hired was
For full three Years to be his Man;
To get his Living at other Mens Becks,
When all his Money was spent and gone.
But when these three Years were at an End,
Lord! in his Heart he was full faint,
When he went back unto England,
And to Latham-Hall return'd again.
But standing there at Latham-Hall,
Desiring to speak with the Old Earl;
The Porter thrust him back again,
Much like unto a dogged Churl.
O stand thee back thou Fellow here,
Thou canst nor speak with my Lord To-day:
Now I'll betide thee, Sir William said;
Sure I was born as good as thee,
But he got Lodging at Holland House,
And was entertained with good Cheer;
And when they were at Supper sat,
He call'd for a Bottle of his best Beer.
Now by your Leave, Goodman Holland,
We will drink a Health to an Englishman,
Whom I have seen in Countries strange,
And William Stanley is his Name.
He is a Lord, said Old Holland,
If ever on English Ground he tread;
He is a Lord of high Degree,
For why his elder Brother's dead.
Old Holland got up betimes in the Morn,
Before it was Break of Day;
To speak with the Earl of Derby,
As he rid a Hunting that way.
Good-morrow my Lord, said old Holland,
To-night a Guest at my House did lie.
And he comes out of Countries strange,
With News of your Son William Stanley.
Bring him hither to me said the old Earl,
Let me see the Guest right speedily;
If he can tell Tydings of my Son Will,
Then well rewarded he shall be.
But when he came his Father before,
Sir William fell upon his knees
Craving Blessing of his Father dear
And Pardon for his Discourtese.
If thou be my Son said the old Earl,
As I do very well think you be;
He gave his Father then the Ring,
By which he knew him perfectly.
He shew'd the Lyon on his Right side,
This is a Mark the Lord sent me;
Queen Elizabeth hearing he was come,
She sent for him immediately.
With gallant Cheer and princely Sort
She entertain'd him Royally;
The Earl of Derby made a Feast,
Which Feast lasted for just Months three.